# ARISE, AWAKE!

## A Call to Safeguard Dharma

Revised & Enlarged Third Edition,
New York, October 6, 2004

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# Benediction

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Hindu Dharma has a number of issues to be addressed for its nourishment and even its survival. These issues are all known to many people. But a few come forward to do something about them. Sri Swami Jyotirmayananda is one of those who do not sit without doing anything to address the issues.

In this small book, "*Awake, Arise*", he has culled from Swami Vivekananda's speeches the relevant portions to inspire Hindus to act and act properly and effectively. I admire Sri Swami Jyotirmayananda's enthusiasm and commitment to actively work for the nourishment and good of the Hindu Dharma.

Om

Dayananda

# FOREWORD


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Sanatana Dharma, popularly known as Hinduism, in particular espouses the syncretic tradition which affirms the validity of pluralistic pathways leading to the One Ultimate Reality, the *Brahman*.

The exalted spiritual experiences of Hindu sages also confirm the internalized authenticity of different modes of worship leading to the Ultimate Reality, whose manifestation can be personal, impersonal and transcendent, all at the same time. In fact, the entire universe is the manifestation of that non-dual, infinite and eternal Reality.

The Indic traditions have no qualms in accommodating people of other faiths subject to the principle of peaceful co-existence and mutual respect. History offers ample evidence of Hindus welcoming people of other faiths whenever they had sought refuge in India. Hindu rulers have always guaranteed the pursuit of different faiths by their subjects. The doors of India and the hearts of Hindus were and are even today open to all peace-loving people who are wise enough to see God's manifestations in diversity.

Swami Jyotirmayanada's writings in this brochure present ample testimony of the validity of the spiritual robustness of Sanatana Dharma. He exhorts all Hindus everywhere to close ranks and serve as exemplary proponents of their faith. I deem it a pleasure to commend this publication for your thoughtful contemplation.

*Bawa Jain*

# Introduction

The contents of this small booklet, comprising three articles and an appendix, are my humble submissions to all those who believe in the preservation of our Sanatana Dharma and its transmission to the rest of humanity, as a means to contain the violence and mayhem generated during the last 2000 years by the mistaken notions of inerrancy of the exclusivist faiths.

All three articles have been heavily influenced by my own commitment to and indoctrination by the eternally rejuvenating interpretations of Hindu thought by Swami Vivekananda. My recent visit to the United States (U.S.) has given me an opportunity to think and write about the need to stimulate the Hindu community residing in the US to reflect and act according to our Dharma. My small contribution towards that end is the publication of this booklet.

It is my fervent hope that the essays included here will catalyze all those who believe in the sanctity and pluralism of Hindu Dharma. The first article deals with a call for vigilance in safeguarding Dharma, the second one was published recently in a local paper and it deals with the need for unity. The third item is a compilation of the precious sayings of Swami Vivekananda, which were specifically selected to remind the readers of the eternal validity of this Great Hindu Monk's ideas and thoughts.

The appendix in this booklet is a UN Petition developed by a group of activists who attended the 5th International Conference of the World Association of Vedic Studies (WAVES) held on July 9-11, 2004, at the University of Maryland, Shady Grove Campus, Maryland, U.S.A., which I was privileged to attend. The originators of the petition are seeking an amendment to the UN Declaration of Human Rights whereby Religious Proselytization can be discouraged at a minimum. A copy of the Petition is appended as the last item with the hope that readers of this booklet will be moved to go on the web and sign their names as well as forward the petition to others who may also be willing to sign it. I have added my signature to the Petition.

*Swami Jyotirmayananda Puri*

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New York, October 6, 2004

# Arise, Awake

## And be Vigilant to Safeguard Dharma

"Secret of power lies in unity and organization. Bringing out life-giving common principles, we have to build upon the common ground of Dharma." -- **Swami Vivekananda**

"Later generations will take care of what they need to take care of. But in our lifetime, we need to make sure that this Dharma is protected; not only it is protected; it is handed over intact without any damage to the generations to come.... Faced with militant missionaries, Hinduism has to show that its plurality and all-encompassing acceptance are not signs of disparateness or disunity. For that, a collective voice is needed."

-- **Swami Dayananda Saraswati**

PROLOGUE:

**Three distinct groups in the world today**

The people of present-day world may be conveniently classified into three distinct groups, each with an inherent special trait of its own, viz. 1) the exclusivist group; 2) the pseudo-secular group; and 3) the victimized group comprising of peace-loving Hindus of the mighty and majestic Hindu Nation, well-known from time immemorial as 'Bharat'. That glorious name was discarded by the 'shrewd' British imperialists in favor of 'India', an appellation given by Europeans to our sacred land. The British had stealthily entered our Motherland by the backdoor, as it were, overpowering the centuries-old 'crude' Islamic rulers who had played havoc in the country, excelling in wanton desecration and vandalism of our holy places. The British imperialism was, however, ultimately uprooted by the ardent '*tapasya*' (penance) of the staunch and mighty nationalist forces of the 20th century India, after a long, protracted and sustained struggle of self-sacrifice, resulting in total independence from the tyrannical British rule. Nevertheless, the sad irony is that the 'modern-day descendents' of Western imperialism continue to pursue their policies for global dominance, which have the potential for endangering the safety, security and the integrity of our Motherland. If it is not checked effectively and at the earliest, we are bound to be back to square one, once again. In order to pre-

vent it, we have to reenergize ourselves to protect and preserve our great Dharmic mores in the tradition of our Great Monk, Swami Vivekananda.

**The exclusivist group**

The exclusivist traditions, comprising the first group, are coercive, 'proselyto-maniac' and therefore harp upon the superiority of their revealed faiths. Proclaiming the 'only one way of salvation, or heaven', 'the only one book', 'the inerrancy of their book' and 'the only one Prophet' or 'the only one Saviour', they want to thrust on others their 'one way traffic to heaven'! They are intolerant of other ways of seeking God. They are dead set against pluralism. They advocate monoculture. They even compete amongst themselves, and are ever engaged in increasing the sizes of their flocks by hook or crook, to 'harvest the souls' of non-believers who are dubbed by them as 'Heathens' and 'Kafirs'.

They want to force one creed, one set of dogmas and beliefs down the throats of all. They attempt to destroy different forms of worship, claiming their one way of worship is the only right one. They claim to have obtained from God, exclusive and irrevocable power of attorney to decide for all humans what is good and what is not redemptive for their souls. They create inter-religious wars and massacres, forcing their claims and dogmas on others. They do not give others freedom to think, freedom to believe, freedom to disbelieve and freedom to adopt any form of worship which suits their temperaments. They divide the human race into conflicting armies and camps of Holy Believers and Unholy Non-Believers. As the world history bears ample testimony, they have mercilessly destroyed other religions and cultures that have not subscribed to their theology of 'one way traffic to heaven'.

It is this 'only one way' ideology that is inherently evil since it adopts a goal of world domination and is the major cause of today's worldwide unrest and terrorism both of which are playing havoc with its attendant untold misery on humanity. What the western scholars now call as the "Clash of Civilizations" is the product of this 'only one way' religious ideology.

**The pseudo-secular group**

The second group comprising of Non-Believers has scant regard for higher values of life, religion or spirituality. Many, being

ardent votaries of hedonism, make a virtue of their atheism and rationalism. ‘Make hay while sun shines’ is their only credo and the ultimate goal of life. These are the leftists and the pseudo-secularists, some of whom do not even hesitate to act as the fifth columnists and traitors to their own country and culture. Normally, though they have just nuisance value, nevertheless we should be eternally vigilant lest they inflict incalculable damage on the polity and culture of India.

Though they may pretend to speak often in the language of their so-called secularism, we invariably find them hobnobbing with the most rabid fundamentalists who are ready to compromise with the safety and security of India. They often wrap themselves in the lingo of so-called ‘human-rights activists’ and yet they act without a trace of humanity or nobility in them. Moreover, in league with the exclusivist group, they appear to be bent upon destroying the Hindu Dharma and the Hindu society, if they can.

**The victimized group comprising of peace-loving Hindus**

The peace-loving Hindus, comprising the third group, who are well known for their legendary, ‘soul-killing’ tolerance and complacency, besides their lack of social and political awareness, are quite naturally the victims. They are today facing a multi-pronged attack from the militant segments of the exclusivist faiths and pseudo-secularists. Both must, therefore, be taken seriously. An assertive organizational structure is thus crucially important for us to develop in order to safeguard our Dharma.

**Our greatest drawback**

It is unfortunate that we Hindus as a society are greatly diversified and hence are not united. This is our greatest drawback, nay misfortune, and the main cause of all our problems and sufferings, not only in India but also the world over. Thus in spite of our individual strength, we often appear disorganized and weak as a group. The exclusivist faiths naturally consider us as an easy prey, like the sacrificial lamb.

**Our Dharma is in jeopardy**

As Hindus, we should realize that the future of our Dharma is in jeopardy as a result of an organized onslaught on it by the exclusivist proselytizers, and the pseudo-secularists who are working vigorously, hand-in-hand, to eliminate Hindu Dharma and the

Hindu Samaj (society).

A relentless war is being waged against Hindu Dharma by the followers of the militant sects of exclusivist faiths (principally drawn from among Islamic Jehadis and fundamentalist Christians) seeking to convert others into their respective faiths. The realization of that grim eventuality becoming a possibility should awaken every apathetic Hindu. For this, it is essential that an all-out continuing and unifying effort is organized by the Hindus in an assertive way so that the impact is visible and effective under a unified consensus leading to the emergence of at least a de-facto leadership structure within the Hindu community.

**We do not speak with one voice**

Though all three exclusivist faiths too have their divisions based on doctrinal differences and may not even worship the same God in each other's places of worship, they have demonstrated their abilities to speak with one voice on issues of socio-political importance. For example, the 'World Council of Churches', 'World Council of Islamic Call' and the 'World Jewish Congress' do come together periodically to issue proclamations that affect their respective communities, worldwide. That kind of a united voice has been singularly absent for the Hindu community either in India or its diasporic community permanently settled outside of India.

**We have too many leaders**

A community's interest is doomed when it cannot speak with one voice. Too many people aspire to be our leaders and or the spokespersons, frequently contradicting each other. There are too many Hindu leaders and organizations each claiming to be superior to others. Acceptance of the collective responsibility by a united and wisely selected leadership is the key to success. When such a united Hindu force is visibly present both in India and in other countries where sizeable Indians live, the opponents of Hinduism would realize that their tactics are not worth following since it may eventually hurt their own interests.

**Ours is a syncretic culture**

Our Hindu culture is syncretic, and our God is not capricious nor tyrannical, sitting far away in the heaven, beyond the clouds,

giving judgments and sending some to heaven and others to eternal hell-fire.

In tune with the exalted spiritual experience of our saints and sages, we believe that the spiritual paths are many (pluralistic) but God, as the Ultimate Reality, is One and non-dual, with infinite names and forms in His many manifest aspects. He is personal, impersonal and transcendent, all at the same time. In fact, the entire universe is His manifestation, and He may be called by any name you like, and may be worshipped by any path that suites you most. Thus, all worship the same Reality in different names and forms, ultimately merging with the same Source.

People of other faiths have to understand this basic spiritual principle of Sanatana Hindu Dharma, if peace and harmony in the world are to be maintained. And, it will not be wrong to say that without this clear understanding of the eternal spiritual principle, by all the three exclusivist faiths, World Peace will ever remain a far cry. Moreover, the so-called interfaith dialogues often indulged in by Westerners will remain a mockery at best. They may even serve as ruses for Westerners to gain converts to exclusivist faiths. Inter-faith dialogues often result in nothing more than a waste of precious time and energy for the participants.

**Ours is an inclusive pluralism and holistic Catholicism**

Thus, firmly wedded to an all-inclusive pluralism and holistic Catholicism, we as Hindus have no qualms in accommodating people of other faiths subject to the principle of peaceful co-existence and mutual respect. History bears clear evidence of the fact that we have always welcomed people of other faiths, whenever they had sought shelter in India. Hindu rulers have always guaranteed freedom for their peoples (including foreign arrivals) to practise different faiths. The doors of India and the pluralistic hearts of Hindus were and are even today open to all peace-loving people who desire to follow their respective faiths.

While Hinduism thus respects all religions and accepts them as true, do other major world religions accept Hinduism as valid, leave alone respecting it? Sri Vamadeva Shastri (Dr. David Frawley <www.vedanet.com>), <vedicinst@aol.com>, a renowned Vedic Scholar, U.S.A., reminds us of an important point in this regard, which needs to be clearly borne in mind. He wants us to -

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> "Note that for all the Hindu tolerance of other religions, there is not one other religion that accepts Hinduism as valid, except in India where these religions are minorities".

## Hindu pluralism and prophetic exclusivism

There are many ignorant Hindus who glibly parrot that 'all religions are the same'. They even exhort us to have '*sarva dharma sama bhava'*, meaning that we Hindus should treat other faiths on an equal footing. But the facts are that the exclusivist faiths are distinctly different from our Sanatana Dharma. The two cannot be equated. Here are significant quotations highlighting the differences between Sanatana Dharma and the exclusivist faiths:

> "Hinduism is not coercive, proselytizing and exclusivist, like the prophetic faiths. It does not believe in 'perversion' (religious proselytization) but, on the contrary, accommodates other religions and cultures. It stands for true secularism which has a vision to accommodate other schools of thought of various religious beliefs, by mutual respect and hence aims at peace and harmony. In short, Hinduism is a way of life available to all human beings on this earth. Helping one to understand the laudable values like *ahimsa* (non-violence), it provides one with the means to live a conflict-free life. In fact, it helps one to realize the true nature of oneself". (Swami Sarvabhutananda Saraswati, <sarvabhuta@yahoo.co.in>, a disciple of Swami Dayananda Saraswati).

> "According to our Sanatana Hindu Dharma, one can, by selflessly discharging one's allotted duties in life, attain both purity of mind and a discriminating, stable intellect (*sthitha dhi*), and with the aid of a competent spiritual guide of one's choice (like the *Bhagvad Gita, Upanishads*, or a qualified Spiritual Master), one can directly commune with *Brahman* -- the Supreme Reality (whom we call as God with our limited understanding). Thus, one can realize the Universal Truth and attain Eternal Bliss, to culminate in everlasting Freedom in this very life (*jivanmukti*), even while apparently bound in a psychophysical organism, viz. the human body. The Abrahamic faiths are exclusionist groups and are incapable of offering such opportunities for spiritual freedom and perfection to a human being. A person is promptly labeled as a non-believer by the preachers of exclusivist faiths if he/she does not believe in their one and only prophet who alone can intercede as an agent or a broker between a soul and his/her exclusive God. The preachers and followers of those faiths seldom hesitate to display their disrespect and even hostility towards the Hindus who, by following the practices prescribed in their Dharmic traditions, are innately capable of invoking spiritual freedom, peace and harmony in life, while the proselytizing followers of the exclusivist faiths wage war-like campaigns to impose

their ‘spiritual slavery’ on the innocent and the poor by all means, including bribe, force, fraud or even treachery”. (Sri Jagdish Sharma, (<yajnajs@yahoo.com>).

## Exclusivists and their global expansion agenda

In the context of religious proselytization and its baneful effects, Hindus must know what Sri Rajiv Malhotra (<www.infinityfoundation.com>) calls as ‘Arabism’ and ‘whiteness’. According to him, Arabism is to Islam what whiteness is to Christianity. Both Arabism and whiteness have a global expansion agenda and histories using God’s directives to them, each claiming unique but conflicting instructions from God:

> “…One must relate Arabism and Islam in the same manner as we related whiteness and Christianity. Converts to Islam gradually start to assume greater amounts of Arab cultural identity, in names, dress, languages, etc. Over time, there is a shift in identity and eventually there comes a generation which calls itself Arab. This is the very cause of the civil war in Sudan where blacks who remain African in identity fight blacks who call themselves Arabs. So Arabism may be viewed as the equivalent of whiteness for the Muslim world, i.e. a scale on which to advance up towards greater states of perfection. Pointing at Mecca five times daily has a subliminal effect in this direction. Religious tensions are often correlated with loss of native language and identity. So it is not Islam that necessarily has a clash with others but Arabism that is latent in Islam and wants to express itself at greater intensities of extrovertedness…. Arabism and whiteness have global expansion agendas and histories using God’s directives to them, each side claiming unique but conflicting instructions from God. Between these, whiteness became successful in spreading itself as universal thought, and hence permeates invisibly, whereas Arabism is very explicitly Arabism and has not mutated into the invisible background form.

> “White culture is based on exclusion from and exploitation of people of color, and this is some heavy baggage to accept. No one wants to appear unfair. White supremacy provided a past justification for exclusion and exploitation, but with white supremacy now discredited, white people do not want to feel bad about past acts of genocide, and present control of the world’s resources. So we simply say we are not white… But at the same time there is no requirement that we surrender our privilege, or even admit that we have it. There is no requirement that we acknowledge the past that has given us wealth and direct material benefit. There is no requirement that we work for multi-cultural justice. Rather we can keep our big houses, our good schools, and our low-cost goods, and say we are not white. It is a wonder of whiteness that we can have our cake and eat it too… White people experience self-hatred and shame, because of our past and how our present is built upon that. White shame is the most taboo topic in white cultures, yet it drives this usage to deny a white identity and see spiritual sal-

vation and redemption from cultures of color". ("Dialog on Whiteness Studies" by Rajiv Malhotra <Rajiv.Malhotra@worldnet.att.net>, courtesy <www.sulekha.com>)

**Grave Dangers of Proselytization to the Hindu society** Discussing the dynamics of proselytizing and its implications for India, Moorthy Muthuswamy PhD, <MoorthyM@comcast.net>, a nuclear physicist based in America, and a director of Indian American Intellectuals Forum, New York, writes:

"The dominant religions of the world, Christianity and Islam both have an overwhelming desire to spread their ideology. With Christian majority nations among the most accomplished and wealthy, missionary groups from these countries have used wealth and the success of their civilization as a carrot to cajole new converts around the world".

Dr. Muthuswamy points out that the Islamic nations in the Middle East are using their oil wealth primarily to spread Islam and achieve that by exporting the concept of Jihad or Holy War to other parts of the non-Islamic world to expand the Islamic world's religious and optical frontiers worldwide. He is of the opinion that this is the primary reason for nations such as India or Israel being the primary targets of Jehadis. Being the superpower, the United States too falls in this category as its power base permeates everywhere.

According to him, "the war on terror is in reality nothing but an effort" by Christian nations to thwart militant Islam's attempts to destroy Western nations in order to spread both Islam and Islamic political dominance world-wide.

To achieve the above, the Jehadiis are now practicing what the Christian crusaders did in the Dark Ages of Europe, namely converting others to their own faith by intimidation and at times through the use of sword and threats of violence. Though all Western nations have given up conversions through the use of force and intimidation, they still use enticements and ruses of many kinds to gain Christian converts from the developing nations. But, in the case of many Muslim nations even today stringent "legal" measures such as death penalties are used against Muslims who convert to other faiths. They also treat their non-Muslim citizens as "infidels" and second-class citizens with vastly reduced rights of citizenship. Many Middle Eastern Muslim countries deny non-Muslims the right to pray or worship their God(s) in public. They also prohibit the importation of non-Muslim religious texts into their countries

Dr. Muthuswamy states further that "in the past, even Christian-dominated, 'democratic and secular' nations have given official backing to the spreading of Christian ideology around the world. Nowadays, unofficial and indirect backing is the norm. In addition these countries have demanded and obtained, 'religious freedom' in less developed countries such as India, so that their missionaries can use modern marketing tools and wealth to con-

vert the local population to their ideology. The fact that the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) has until recently, downplayed religious abuses by Saudi Arabia (its ally) and highlighted China's (a competitor) protection of its population from proselytizers, including ones from America" reveal the hypocritical stance of USCIRF. The Chinese leadership were emboldened in the past by the muted behavior of the United States and effectively shielded its peoples from proselytization by both Christian and Muslim missionaries.

Dr. Muthuswamy's thesis is that "historically, once a nation's majority population has become either Christian or Muslim owing to various forms of proselytization, the conversion process accelerates very quickly and the entire population becomes either overwhelmingly Christian or Muslim. Reason: the new converts have such a strong fervor that they put considerable pressure on rest of the non-believers to convert to their faith or make their life unpleasant in so many ways that non-believers just emigrate to other nations. This is what has precisely occurred in India's own Northeast as 2001 census results have indicated and in Kashmir valley, from where non-Muslims have been driven out. This has happened in countries such as Pakistan, Bangladesh and Malaysia". (Excerpted from Moorthy Muthuswamy's article: "Dynamics of Proselytizing", courtesy <IndiaCause.com>).

Dr. C. Alex Alexander, <calexo@hotmail.com>, in his article ("Proselytization in India: an Indian Christian's Perspective", <Sulekha.com>, May 22, 2003) makes somewhat similar points about the work of Christian missionaries in India:

"The peripatetic foreign missionaries certainly have no stake in preserving the territorial integrity of India…..Separatist movements in Northeastern India have been suspected of deriving support from foreign missionary groups. Given the sordid history of Western Christianity, eternal vigilance is indeed prudent. A page from the recent history of East Timor may be appropriate for Indians to review in order to understand the negative potential of off-shore proselytization! The indigenous tribes in that island were first converted to Christianity by the Dutch and Portuguese missionaries. Then they were helped by the Western nations to secede from Indonesia. India may run similar risks if it continues to allow foreign missionaries to have unfettered access to its tribal populations".

In that article, Dr. Alexander also states that the United Nations may be the "last best hope for mankind to usher in a peaceful world devoid of religious upheavals, if theocratic nations can be encouraged to amend their Constitutions" to embrace secularism and until they do so, they should not be accorded either full voting rights or the same status as other secular and sovereign nations are. Dr. Alexander's full-length article can be accessed through <http://www.sulekha.com/expressions/column.asp?cid=305819>

In this booklet, there is also a copy of a petition-on-line authored by Dr. Alexander and four of his associates seeking an amendment to the UN Dec-

laration of Human Rights to discourage religious proselytization.

**We Hindus never made an effort to learn the psyche of our adversaries**

According to Sri Vijay Kapoor <kapoor5@aol.com>, President, East-West Cultural Organizations, Willingboro, NJ, if we Hindus fail to define what inflicts us, we can never get rid of the 'virus', which is killing us. "To my mind, that 'virus' is our 'ignorance' of what motivates Christians and Islamic forces to keep attacking Hindu culture either through guns or via missionaries. The anti-dote to the 'virus', which inflicts us, is to read and absorb the causes of daily carnage carried out by the Abrahamic faiths". Sri Vijay Kapoor says:

> "…To determine what exactly happened and how to prevent future attacks in the USA, the 9/11 commission was set up. Their main finding was that it was brought about due to 'intelligence failure'. The sad part for India is that we have been attacked 1000 times! We have never bothered to set up a 'commission' why we invited repeated attacks. Unfortunately, reasons of attack and our failure to encounter them are the same as 9/11 commission has determined for the Twin Tower attack in the New York City in 2001.
>
> "Hindus keep on bringing absurd reasoning of 'Prithvi Raj-Jai Chand' factor of divisiveness or being divided in many small kingdoms. We are ashamed to face that back in 7th century, a few hundred horsemen under the command of a 17 year-old Arab invaded Punjab and looted tons of gold from the 'Surya Mandir' in Multan. Gazni was a poor, deprived, depraved and desperate small time criminal. He repeatedly attacked until he succeeded.
>
> "The Hindu failure is that we have never made an effort to learn the inner working and the psyche of our adversaries. What motivates them to attack and kill?
>
> "We hold Vedas as our sacred books. 'Veda' means knowledge. But, we are most ignorant people when it comes to knowing our enemies. We have compartmentalized 'knowledge' only for '*atmavidya*' (Self-knowledge), but have no skill in learning about the evils which surround us. We chant *Ramayana* and *Mahabharat*. Both these epics should have taught us that it is vital to know all about 'Ravan' and have 'Hanuman' to go out and search the strength and weakness of our adversaries. We have never learnt from the image of Lord Krishna pulling his chariot in the middle of Kukrukshetra prior to war and, again, tell Arjuna all about Kaurav's -- his adversaries, even though they were Arjun's cousins.
>
> "There is daily front page news about violence committed by Christian and Islamic forces, going back not only during our life span but as far as the Western history is recorded -- that is for the last 2000 years. And most un-

fortunate part is that from Gandhi and Nehru to present-day politicians, Swamis and public in general fail to take notice of it.

"I do not know what will be on the front page of newspapers tomorrow, but I can bet that it will be smudged in blood, which is the natural outcome of the ongoing conflict between the dominant exclusivist faiths -- Christian vs. Islamic. Remove the Bible, Torah and the Koran from the landscape and there would be no perpetual wars.

"How is it, that Hindus cannot grasp this daily event? Hindus walk in sleep! If we fail to define what inflicts us, we can never get rid of the 'virus' which is killing us. To my mind, that virus is our 'ignorance' of what motivates Christians and Islamic forces to keep attacking Hindu culture either through guns or via missionaries. The anti-dote to the 'virus', which inflicts us, is to read and absorb the causes of daily carnage carried out by the exclusivist faiths".

**Need for a unified Hindu Force**

The United Hindu Force must be like a steel wall. Any one who dares to dash against it with evil intentions would only hurt himself. Now the question arises: How is it possible for us Hindus to become a formidable force against our opponents if we are not united and well organized? If we have the true desire to become united, we will be able to forge a united force. Everything is subject to the 'WILL' of the people. It is the 'WILL' of the people that decides the future. Where there is a WILL there is a way. And the way must lead to the destination, which in our case depends on our ability to construct a path to form a Unified Hindu Force.

**Developing a unified leadership structure**

One way to do that is to hold an annual or periodic gathering of all prominent subdivisions and sects of the Hindus, both in India and overseas, with the purpose of seeking ways and means of fostering greater unity on national as well as international levels. Such a gathering could also endeavour to develop a unified leadership structure and to consider issues and policies of basic importance in regard to the welfare of Hindus and their Dharma everywhere.

**An initial step in the U.S.A.**

At least here in the U.S.A., as an initial step, the various Hindu organizations and Hindu members of other Indian organizations, can come together, cutting across all barriers, of caste, language and geographical upbringing in India, and join hands to form a United Hindu Forum of America (UHFA).

It is indeed a tragedy that with over 800 Hindu religious institutions (Temples and Ashrams combined) in the U.S.A., we do not even have a web-based linkage of such organizations to share information of mutual interest and benefit. If that can be accomplished either formally or informally, our efforts to foster and garner greater cooperation from the media to project our interests may be more successful.

In addition, the film media, very popular and pervasive in India, could make powerful and positive contributions by producing films exalting patriotism, social health and traditional Indian values.

**The anti-Hindu seculars of the media**

In this context we should note very carefully what Sri S. Gurumurthy (<guru@gurumurthy.net>), the popular Hindu columnist of Chennai, calls as "the ISI work" done "more credibly" by the so-called seculars in the Indian media and elsewhere, who take every opportunity to misrepresent, nay malign Hindus and run down their hoary Sanatana Dharma:

> "The ISI spends millions to convince the Muslims in Pakistan, in India and elsewhere that those who identify and assert themselves as Hindus are violent and India is anti-Muslim. The seculars in the media are doing the ISI work more credibly. Yes, they accomplish this by lying and suppressing the truth. They have no qualms or guilt doing that. Shame, indeed".

All kudos to Sri Gurumurthy-ji for his guts and gumption to tell the truth, unlike others of his ilk who are habituated to hide the truth or tell half-truths cloaked in a little bit of secularist's phantasy.

Truth may be as bitter as the bitter gourd, nevertheless, just as the bitter gourd has the proven healing property as discovered by Ayurveda long ago, the truth-telling habit, which should be the main corner stone of journalistic ethics, can eventually rid the present-day journalism of its chronic malady.

**Remain vigilant to safeguard Dharma**

It is high time that those who are inclined to harm the Hindus change their attitude rather quickly and learn to respect others. Let us also warn the apathetic Hindus: Wake up! Mother India is calling for your aid and She is in distress. Arise, awake and remain vigilant to safeguard Dharma and the Nation.

Regard the land of Bharat as the "Mother" ("*Bharat Mata*"), draw inspiration from the national song '*Vande Mataram'*, and be fired with the 'Man-making Gospel' of Swami Vivekananda -- the great Hindu Monk of India, and take pride in the ancient culture of India.

Remember the golden words of our saints and sages: Dharma is that by which we rise to prosperity, civility and happiness. Strength and valor are virtues, while weakness and cowardice are evils.

**Countering forces which challenge our way of life**

As Dr. Mahesh Mehta, Vice Chairman of World Hindu Council (Overseas) rightly observed on the 'Tenth Hindu Unity Day' celebration in New York recently:

> "No matter how much respect we may have for other religions, they have a fixed view about us. Since we do not agree with them, they assume that we are in conflict with them. In the light of the teachings of the spiritually enlightened saints and sages of India, we Hindus believe that all human beings and creatures are the veritable manifestations of God, the One Supreme Reality, who is Infinite and Eternal. For us God, as the One Divine Consciousness, is everywhere, in everybody and is the very substratum of all existence. This exalted Hindu view of spirituality is neither palatable nor acceptable to those who claim the monopoly of their God. This is one of the reasons that they are against us. That is why they malign and belittle Hindu Dharma. We have an excellent philosophy and ideas, but since we are not well organized and united, our viewpoints are not heard with the attention we deserve. It is, therefore, absolutely essential that we Hindus should recognize the problems with which Hindu society is confronted and counter the forces which challenge our way of life. We can do that only if we UNITE by coming together as one people."

**Hindu Unity and activism will rectify and prevent injustice and abuse**

As Professor Babu Suseelan from Pennsylvania emphasized:

> "Hindus have no choice but to UNITE, if they ever hope to regain dignity, strength and political power to confront the evil forces ranged against them.
>
> Aggressive assertiveness is required to project our desire for peace and co-existence. Hindus should be active, not passive. Hindu Unity and activism will rectify and prevent injustices and abuse whenever and wherever they occur. Our future survival and even the mankind require the propagation of the all-inclusive, spiritual, pluralistic Hindutva. If the adherents of exclusivist faiths were as spiritually enlightened as Hindus, there would be no faith-based reasons for religious strife, war, brutality, oppression, murder, terror-

ism and coercive religious conversions."

## Truths realized by our sages of yore

Quoting from *Rig-Veda* and other Hindu scriptures, Ms. Lobo, Community News Director on the International Television Channel, New York, pointed out:

"The Concept of '*vasudhaiva kutumbakam*' (the world is verily one single family) and '*ekam sat viprah bahuda vadanti*' (God, as the One Supreme Reality, is non-dual, but the enlightened ones designate Him variously), was realized by our sages 1500 BC* [* *'in fact, over 5000 years per Hindu tradition'* – Author] and enshrined this Eternal Truth in our Vedic scriptures. But the western world is only now talking about the world being a 'global village' and about 'respect for human dignity'. Hindu Dharma teaches not only tolerance, respect for other creeds, and co-existence, but also respect for elders and the underprivileged ones, and even for the subhuman creatures, plants and trees; in short, to the entire kingdom of the movable and the immovable in the creation.

"It is the traditional Hindu way to pray for the welfare and happiness of one and all, everywhere. A true Hindu may not merely say, 'God Bless India', (like others when they repeat 'God Bless America') but he will certainly pray for the peace and happiness of the whole world. Even to this day, A Hindu's daily prayer is '*lokah samasthah sukhino bhavanthu*' (May the entire world be happy and peaceful). If all existence is spiritually one and non-dual at the very substratum, as realized by the enlightened Vedic Rishis of yore, we cannot but pray for one and all – for the universal well-being, peace and harmony.

"It is therefore our bounden duty to nurture, preserve and propagate the Hindu values of life all over the world, for peace and harmony as also for the commonweal, at a time when the world is endangered by acute unrest, crass materialism, and rabid fundamentalism of the worst sort."

## Do we live our culture and values, in our day-to-day life?

In the words of Br. Krishnamurthy of the Chinmaya Mission:

"Do we, the Hindu parents, know our Hindu culture and values, and live them in our day-to-day life? Only by setting an example to our growing children, we can effectively communicate these values to them. The parents must be proud of their culture. By their noble conduct and example, they can communicate culture and values effectively to their growing children. Are we really proud of our culture?"

### Realize the magical powers of the word 'HINDU'

"Unfortunately, disunity has been the bane of Hindu Society. A cursory glance at the Hindu history will testify to the fact that Hindus were defeated not because of any lack of gallantry or valor on their part, but because of the betrayal and treachery of our own people. Bringing all Hindus on one platform, and creating a feeling of fraternity -- irrespective of their caste,

color, language, and geographical location -- is the crying need of the hour.

> "We Hindus, think primarily in terms of our language, province or sect, as Gujaratis, Punjabis, Tamils, Maharashtrians, Bengalis, Sindhis, or Shaivites, Vaishnavites and so on. We must understand one fact very clearly. When someone says he is a Malayalee, he limits himself to just 15 million people. If someone else describes himself as Gujarati, he reduces his size and strength to only 50 million people. But the moment someone proclaims, 'I am a Hindu', he instantly joins the mighty club of one billion strong people. It is unfortunate that we do not realize the magical powers of the word 'HINDU' "

-- lamented Narayan Kataria, the Organizer-Coordinator of the 'Tenth Hindu Unity Day' in New York.

**The cultural annihilation of Hindus**

Pointing out the sinister attempt at the cultural annihilation of the Hindus in India by the present-day rulers, Ms. Sandhya Jain <jsandhya@satyam.net.in>, popular columnist of India, warns:

> "It is time to rise and validate our culture and our history. Never before has the imperative for determination and faith in defense of our existential ethos been so urgent, as it is now".

Prefacing her latest thought-provoking article with the significant utterance of Archibald MacLeish, a poet (who says, "How shall freedom be defended? By arms when it is attacked by arms; by truth when it is attacked by lies; by democratic faith when it is attacked by authoritarian dogma. Always and in the final act, by determination and faith"), Ms. Sandhya reminds us of the danger unknown to most of us thus:

> "Unknown to most of us, we are perilously close to the final act of our existence as a living civilization. Never before has the imperative for determination and faith in defense of our existential ethos been so urgent, as it is now. A rag-tag anti-Hindu coalition is playing with the Dharma and cultural sensitivity of the people, even as a pusillanimous BJP juggles with political vocabulary to evade the legitimate concerns of the Hindu community in its infatuation with an ephemeral Muslim vote.

> "Secularism has taken a great leap forward (in India), invading the private person of the (Hindu) individual and denying the right to observe customary forms of Dharma. It is obvious that something deeper is afoot, and its purpose is the cultural annihilation of the Hindu people. We are facing a pincer attack from sinister quarters; pusillanimity will only take us to extinction. It is time to rise and validate our culture and our history.

> "Secularist dogma has so terrorized contemporary Hindus that they hesitate to take up cudgels on behalf of their Dharma and culture for fear of being

branded 'communal.' Personally, I subscribe to Sir Winston Churchill's profound admonition -- 'If you will not fight for the right when you can easily win without bloodshed; if you will not fight when your victory will be sure and not too costly; you may come to the moment when you will have to fight with all the odds against you and only a small chance of survival. There may even be a worse case: you may have to fight when there is no hope of victory, because it is better to perish than to live as slaves' ".

(Ms. Sandhya Jain in her article, "UPA's jaziya through backdoor", *Pioneer*, August 24, 2004).

**A critique of Hindu Unity**

Commenting on the Hindu Unity Day Celebration in New York, Sadhu Rangarajan (<sadhu@md4.vsnl.net.in>), Founder-President, Sister Nivedita Academy, Bangalore, who is forthright and outspoken in his utterance, had the following to say:

"…All that we wish is that these thoughts (about Hindu unity) should not just remain on paper or find expression only in meetings and conferences, but are to be translated into action. A clear-cut policy should be formulated and a solid plan is to be chalked out and implemented to unite the Hindus of all hues and colors.

"For how many millennia will we go on proclaiming at the top of our voice that Hinduism stands for *'vasudhaiva kutumbakam'* and that Hinduism stands for universality of religions and accepts all forms of worship as different pathways to one Ultimate Reality. Who among the non-Hindus is prepared to listen to this discourse? Let our leaders stop playing the worn out gramophone record. Let them boldly declare that Hinduism, Hindutva and Hindu Nationalism are identical, that every Hindu must necessarily be a patriot first and last and that '*Bharat Mata*' is the Supreme Goddess and She should be worshipped first and foremost. Worship of '*Bharat Mata*' alone is the one and only way to unite all Hindus inside and outside the country. Until this is done, all talk about Hindu Dharma and Hindu Unity will remain as mere rhetoric.

"If there is any attack on the Hindu religion or society, it is only the RSS, Shiva Sena, Bajrang Dal and VHP who rise for the protection of the Hindus and most of the so-called Hindu spiritual leaders are just silent spectators of what is happening around them. They do not even raise their voices in defense of the Hindus or for Hindu rights.

"When a State Government bans conversion, the entire Christian church including the Archbishop, Bishop, Priests, Nuns, Evangelists and those running Christian institutions come out on the street to hold demonstrations against it. Many Muslim Mullahs, Moulvis and Imams do not hesitate to clamor openly in support of Muslim militants even when the latter's terrorist activities inflict mayhem on our society. However, even if Hindu

women are raped and their children butchered by fanatic and fundamentalist militants, our exalted spiritual leaders often appear to be unconcerned about it and their voice is seldom raised in support of the Hindus. While these worthies even hesitate to sing the national song (‘*Vande Mataram*’) considering it as political, they are not at all ashamed to sing ‘*Iswara Allah tere naam’* or ‘*Yesu pitaa Prabhu tu’* in the Bhajans. Hindus should therefore arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached”, exhorted Sadhu Rangarajan.

Sri Krishan Bhatnagar, <krishan.kb@verizon.net>, reminds us that we, as Hindus, should not forget making our own children and kith and kin as staunch Hindus. Moreover, exhorting Hindus to support Hindu missionary work, he suggests:

> “They should earmark a small percentage of their income (and / or time) for missionary work and for finding such persons and financially and otherwise supporting them. The devastation through mind-control by media, terrorism, temple nationalization, etc. does not bother Hindus. They conveniently assume VHP, RSS etc. to be responsible for the job, without any personal obligation. But it will need many hundreds more NGOs and lakhs of more volunteers for changing that course”.

## EPILOGUE:

**Need of the hour and the bounden duty of every Hindu**

So, is it not the bounden duty of every Hindu to arise, awake and be vigilant to safeguard Hindu Dharma? Swami Vivekananda exemplified that spirit by acting on it over a hundred years ago by relentlessly calling on all of us to do our part and shine brilliantly as resplendent stars of pluralism.

What this “global village” of ours most urgently needs today is a true understanding of our credo “*ekam sat viprah bahudha vadanti*”. We have nurtured it for nearly four millennia and it is time that we make a concerted attempt to communicate the vitality of our scintillating faith to our brothers and sisters of the Abrahmic religions so that they can understand the redemptive value of our credo for ensuring World Peace. That is not easy to do if we do not UNITE ourselves as a people.

* * *

## Acknowledgement:

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*"India was the motherland of our race and Sanskrit the mother of Europe's languages. India was the mother of our philosophy, of much of our mathematics, the ideals embodied in Christianity...of self-government and democracy. In many ways, Mother India is the mother of us all".*

-- WILL DURANT, American Historian (1885-1981).

# Realizing Swami Vivekananda's Dream of Unity

**By Swami Jyotirmayananda**

[*India Tribune*, August 21, 2004]

**New York**: I am motivated to write this after reading Vasu Reddy's article, "Looking for Swami Vivekananda to inspire community", published in *India Tribune* dated July 31, 2004.

Swami Vivekananda realized long ago the need of unifying the Nation by bringing together the various spiritual forces working on the Indian soil. With an unfailing foresight, he showed the way of solidarity and national integration.

"National union in India", declared Swamiji, "must be a gathering up of its scattered spiritual forces. A nation in India must be a union of those whose hearts beat to the same spiritual tune."

In realization of this vision, a sincere attempt was made. A first step in this direction was the formation of the Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha, an apex Hindu body, three years ago.

And history was made in Chennai last November when, for the first time in modern Hinduism, eminent Spiritual Heads from different parts of India got together and deliberated upon the momentous issues facing the Hindu society and the nation. They crystallized the collective Hindu consciousness and spoke in a single Hindu voice.

"So far, there has been no single voice that could claim to speak for the entire Hindu Society. There has been no single body that has been recognized to represent the oldest religious and spiritual tradition in the world. And most of the attacks that the hoary Hinduism has come under for some time now are because it is perceived to be an amorphous body which can be taken for granted, slighted with impunity and attacked. Therefore, the Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha, a body that comprises almost all the important Hindu religious leadership in the country, has come about not a day soon. It is the Apex Body of the Hindu Dharma", pointed out a popular evening newspaper of Chennai <www.newstodaynet.com>.

Swami Dayananda Saraswati, the convener of the Sabha, who guided the proceedings of this historic conference, highlighted the vision and the mission of this Apex Hindu Body as also its formation three years ago. He hailed the Meet as a significant historical event.

"Hindu Dharma requires one single voice" he declared, and exhorted the assembled Spiritual Heads: "You are our strength. You occupy a position, which is very significant. Your participation, therefore, in this conference is very important in formulating the resolutions."

“Later generations will take care of what they need to take care of. But in our lifetime, we need to make sure that this Dharma is protected; not only it is protected; it is handed over intact without any damage to the generations to come”.

An immediate issue with the Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha was deregulating the Hindu Religious and Endowments Act that gave the so-called secular government total control over Hindu places of worship; nor did the Sabha hold back on its objections to proselytization as a project of faith. Sanatana Dharma does not seek to subvert, conquer or denigrate other religious persuasions and faiths. It was therefore resolved to appeal to the leadership of the proselytizing religions in the country to review and change their theological disposition towards Hinduism to promote harmony and avoid any conflict, violence and disruption in Indian society.

Proselytizing religions should not be allowed to erase the identity and spiritual and religious *sampradayas* of tribal, *adivasi* and mountain-dwelling communities; these communities, far from power centers, are inherently weak and therefore need support to maintain their spiritual and religious identities.

Social peace and harmony will prevail in the country only with correct understanding of the concept of religious freedom, which means freedom to practice one’s own religion but not denigrating the religion of others, such denigration being the basis of all proselytization activities in the country.

The Acharya Sabha is not against any religion or religious community in the country to which Hindu Dharma has played the role of a well-meaning host. However, the Sabha will not allow disruption of Hindu families and consequentially Hindu Society by other religions in the country; nor will it accept foreign interference in the form of monetary and other support to contribute to such disruption.

The Acharya Sabha was of the view that concerted and conscious efforts are necessary to safeguard and advance the legitimate interests of Hindu Society. The spirit of tolerance and inclusiveness of Hindu Dharma have been exploited by aggressive religions too long.

The protection and strengthening of Hindu Society is in the hands of Hindus. Hindu society needs to be strengthened by ridding it of birth-based caste-centric rigidities such as untouchability; dowry-related atrocities on women, female feticide and infanticide etc.

Restoring individual dignity through education, employment opportunities and empowerment of women will result in restoring social dignity and strengthening of Hindu society. Women are nurturers and pro-

tectors of life and the essence of religion and spirituality calls for partnership of women and men in all aspects of life for building a harmonious and just society.

Justifiable and informed pride should be inculcated in the youth of Hindu Society at being Hindus and to understand that practicing Hinduism does not stop with some rituals but involves a set of great values.

Efforts must be made to recover, rejuvenate and rebuild places and sites, sacred in Hindu memory -- temples, bathing ghats, pilgrimage centers etc.

Swami Dayanandaji said: “Faced with militant missionaries and missionary militants, Hinduism has to show its plurality, and all-encompassing acceptance is not a sign of disparateness or disunity. For that, what is needed is a collective voice. In the Acharya Sabha, it can find one. Quite simple, it is a Sabha whose time has come.”

“The idea of the Sabha is to become a massive movement of the people of Hindu Dharma, with the primary focus on caring for the poor, the downtrodden and the powerless. This is a commitment,” he emphasized. “But more than such caring proposals, the very fact that there is now an umbrella body that has representation from all the important *Matams* (Hindu monasteries) and *Peetams* (traditional religious establishments) in the country will in itself send out all the right signals that Hinduism is looking for.”

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*For further information about the Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha, please contact* ***Swami Dayananda Saraswati,*** *Arsha Vidya Gurukulam, PO Box 1059, Saylorsburg, PA 18353, Tel: 570-992-2339, Fax: 570-992-7150 / 9617, Email: <marthad@epix.net>*

* * *

## Swami Vivekananda on the Need for Unity

*“Live in harmony. Be organized and cooperative. Speaking with one voice, make your resolutions with one mind…May you have a common goal in mind. May your assembly be common, and may your hearts beat as one. May you strive for a common goal with your hearts sharing equally. United be your minds so that all may share a similar status in life”. “Be thou all of one mind, be thou all of one thought.”*

**-- RIG-VEDA** 10.191.1-4

### Being of one mind is the secret of society

“Being of one mind is the secret of society”, said Swami Vivekananda, the great Hindu Monk of India. “Secret of power lies in unity and organization”, he pointed out. “Bringing out life-giving common principles, we have to build up on the common ground of Dharma”.

Swamiji highlighted the unifying power of Dharma and emphasized the need for gathering up of scattered spiritual forces: “To make a great future India, the whole secret lies in organization, accumulation of

power, coordination of wills… The future India depends entirely upon that. That is the secret -- accumulation of will-power, coordination, bringing them all, as it were, into one focus".

He pointed out: "The one common ground that we have is our sacred tradition, our Dharma. That is the only common ground, and upon that, we shall have to build… Unity in Dharma, therefore, is absolutely necessary as the first condition of the future of India. There must be the recognition of one Dharma throughout the length and breadth of this land".

"We know that our Dharma has certain common grounds, common to all our sects, however varying their conclusions may be, however different their claims may be… So there are certain common grounds; and within their limitations this Dharma of ours admits of a marvelous variation, and infinite amount of liberty to think and live our own lives", Swamiji highlighted and went on to say: "What we want is to bring out these life-giving common principles of our Dharma, and let every man, woman, and child, throughout the length and breadth of this country, understand them, know them, and try to bring them out in their lives. This is the first step; and, therefore, it has to be taken".

"We see how in Asia, and especially in India, race difficulties, linguistic difficulties, social difficulties, national difficulties, all melt away before this unifying power of Dharma… We know that to the Indian mind there is nothing higher than dharmic ideals, that are the key-note of Indian life, and we can only work in the line of least resistance", he exhorted.

"It is only true that the ideal of Dharma is the highest ideal, in the case of India it is the only possible means of work; work in any other line, without first strengthening this, would be disastrous. Therefore, the first plank in the making of a future India, the first step is to be hewn out of that rock of ages, is this unification of Dharma", he emphasized.

"All of us have to be taught that we Hindus -- dualists, qualified monists, or monists, Shaivas, Vaishnavas, or Pashupatas -- to whatever denomination we may belong, have certain common ideas behind us," he reminded us.

"National union in India", Swamiji declared, "must be a gathering up of its scattered spiritual forces. A nation in India must be a union of those whose hearts beat to the same spiritual tune".

We should remember that these are the words of a great Acharya, a saint and a modern prophet of India.

# Petition to Prohibit Religious Proselytization

PETITION TO THE UN SUBCOMMISSION ON PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS SEEKING AN AMENDMENT TO THE UN DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS WHEREBY RELIGIOUS PROSELYTIZATION WILL BE PROHIBITED.

After the 5th International Conference of WAVES (World Association for Vedic Studies), held on July 9-11, 2004, at the University of Maryland, Shady Grove Campus, Maryland, U.S.A., a small community of activists developed a recommendation to the UN Commission on Human Rights to seek an amendment to its Declaration of Human Rights document in order to discourage religious proselytization.

WAVES is an organization with a stated mission of educating and preserving Indic traditions, started by Indian academics in this country. It is led by Professor Bhudev Sharma, Professor of Mathematics at Clark Atlanta University, Atlanta, GA. I have been most impressed by the scholarly contributions of WAVES to disseminate all that is good and glorious in the Indic traditions.

The originators of the petition do realize that the most a petition of this kind can hope to achieve is the generation of an awareness among the current participants of the UN Subcommission on Promotion and Protection of Human Rights about the dire need to protect an individual's right to remain insulated from the aggressive forays of proselytizing religions. The chances of that happening in 2004-2005 are probably much greater in the next 12 months than ever before because of the recent election of Sri Soli Sorabjee of India as this year's Chair for the Sub-commission.

The aim of the originators of the petition is to gather 100,000 signatures and then have it certified for delivery to the UN agencies. The entire group that worked on it as well as I will greatly appreciate your consideration of the petition which can be accessed from the site indicated below.

To prevent spamming and virus contamination, certain features of the site were disabled and therefore occasionally one may get an error warning because of the filters installed therein. Please disregard the error warning (if you get one) and please go ahead with the signature button etc. You can also view the names of other signatories after you sign the petition. I hope that you will not only sign it but also transmit the petition’s link to your friends so that it reaches a more extensive audience. You can do that by using the petition’s own “send it to a friend”

bar at the bottom of the page on which the text of the petition appears. Thank you.

The Petition referred to above is attached to this note below**. But, in order to sign it on the web, please note that you have to access it by going to:

http://www.petitiononline.com/mod_perl/signed.cgi?unchr900&1

**To: UN High Commission for Human Rights

PETITION TO THE UN COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO ELIMINATE PROSELYTIZATION IN THE INTEREST OF PROMOTING WORLD PEACE AND HARMONY, AND RESPECTFUL COEXISTENCE OF ALL RELIGIONS.

Addressed to: Hon. Soli Sorabjee, Chairman, UN Sub-Commission on Promotion and Protection of Human Rights., Hon. Louise Arbour, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights., Hon. Kofi Annan, Secretary-General, United Nations and Heads of States of all Secular Nations.

We, the undersigned, are deeply concerned about inter-religious conflicts fomented by the proselytizing activities of certain Christian and Islamic sects, who appear to be locked in a race to convert the entire world's population into their respective monotheistic faiths. We believe that the large majority of Muslims and Christians do not harbor such grand aspirations and are opposed to the proselytizing schemes of their organized religions. We represent a variety of religious backgrounds. We are troubled by the likelihood of major clashes of civilizations resulting from the exclusive truth claims of monotheistic religions. We also anticipate such conflicts will weaken the social fabric of many countries by pitting religions against one another and destroying indigenous cultures. Further, we are firmly convinced that we should act now to prevent all inter-religious conflicts and the occurrence of greater misery, death and destruction than what we have witnessed thus far in the course of human history, most brought about by the evils of proselytization. Therefore we are hereby appealing to the United Nations as a whole and the UN Commission for Human Rights in particular to adopt an amendment to Article 18 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights by expanding it through the addition of a second sentence (capitalized):

"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and

observance. NO INDIVIDUAL OR ORGANIZATION MAY SEEK TO CONVERT AN INDIVIDUAL OR A GROUP OF INDIVIDUALS, INCLUDING MINORS OR INDIVIDUALS OF LIMITED COGNITIVE ABILITIES, FORMALLY OR INFORMALLY, FROM ONE RELIGION TO ANOTHER THROUGH OFFERING FINANCIAL OR OTHER MATERIAL INCENTIVES; THROUGH PHYSICAL, MENTAL, OR EMOTIONAL COERCION; OR THROUGH THREATS OR INTIMIDATION OF ANY KIND."

In the interests of preserving world peace and harmony, and for avoidance of religiously motivated conflict, we, the undersigned, respectfully request that the above amendment be adopted in its entirety by both the UN High Commission for Human Rights and the United Nations General Assembly. We also request heads of all secular nations and their citizenry to lend their whole-hearted support to this petition.

*The <u>UN & Religious Proselytization Petition</u> to UN High Commission for Human Rights was created by* ***C. Alex Alexander, Aditi Banerjee, Chitra Raman, S. K. Raman, S. S Vinekar*** *and written by* ***C. Alex Alexander*** *<calexo@cablespeed.com>*

* * *

## Author

SWAMI JYOTIRMAYANANDA PURI hails from South Kanara, Karnataka, India, where he had his school and college studies at the Mangalore Ramakrishna Mission Students Home, and while serving in a firm in Madras, got the *Mantra Deeksha* in 1966 from Swami Vireswarananda, the tenth President of the Ramakrishna Order. In 1973 he was selected by Sri Eknath Ranade, the Founder-President of the Vivekananda Rock Memorial and Vivekananda Kendra at Kanyakumari, as one of the life-worker trainees of the first batch of the Vivekananda Kendra, a Service Mission. After the training at Kanyakumari, and service at the Calcutta and Madras Centers of the Kendra, he took to monastic life independently in 1976. After Sannyas and an itinerant life of two years, he worked for a book on Swami Vivekananda (986 pages), the first edition of which found light in 1986 and the fifth and the latest edition was released at New York in the context of the UN Millennium World Peace Summit (2000). Entitled *Vivekananda -- His Gospel of Man-making*, "this monumental volume which chronicles the important events in the life and times of a great Son of Modern India, highlighting his mission and the message, is the result of five years' patient, careful devoted work." The fifth edition having been exhausted, it is available as an e-book in CD-ROM, with a Power-Point presentation on Swami Vivekan-

anda, in the context of the centenary of his *Maha Samadhi* (2002)

Swami Jyotirmayananda participated in the 1993 Parliament of Religions held in Chicago, and the “Global Vision 2000” Program in Washington, in commemoration of the centenary of Swami Vivekananda's visit to America. In 2000, he attended the UN Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders at New York. In 2001 he participated in the “Vedanta in the Third Millennium” Conference organized by the Chicago Vedanta Society, and took part in the “*Vishwa Dharma Prasaar Yaatra*” Program. In 2002, he attended the fourth International Conference organized by the World Association of Vedic Studies, at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, MA, where he presented a paper on “India’s Spirituality and its World-wide Impact”. In the same year, in the context of the 100th anniversary of Swami Vivekananda’s *mahasamadhi*, Swami Jyotirmayananda had prepared, based on his book, a Power-Point Presentation titled “Swami Vivekananda -- The Great Hindu Monk of India and His Lasting Spiritual Legacy to Humanity”, which was shown to the student community in some of the universities and colleges, during his eight months tour in the U.S. Some of the Vedanta Centers and Temples in the U.S. also arranged for this Presentation.

Early in July 2004, he participated in the “Konkani Sammelan” at Los Angeles, and also in the fifth International Conference organized by the World Association of Vedic Studies, at the University of Maryland, Shady Grove Campus, Maryland, U.S.A., where he presented a paper on “India’s Intellectual Traditions in Contemporary Global Context”.

He is presently on a six months tour of the U.S., seeking support from devotees and friends for the various Seva activities of Sri Veera Maruti Seva Trust, Mangalore, <www.veeramaruti.org>, (presided by Sri Nandavar Yogish Bhat, MLA, Mangalore), of which he is a Trustee.

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*For further details, visit* <http://www.vivekanandagospel.org>
*E-mail*: <swamijyoti@vivekanandagospel.org>

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Date: 10/06/2004 00:11:49 -0400
From: "Satish Misra" <satish_misra@hotmail.com>
To: swamijyoti@vivekanandagospel.org
Subject: “Arise, Awake”: Revised & Enlarged 3rd Edition

It is indeed a pleasure and privilege for me to write a few words in appreciation of the labour of love of Swami Jyotirmayananda, Editor-Publisher of “*Vivekananda -- His Gospel of Man-making*”, in bringing out the brochure, “Arise, Awake”. I really enjoyed reading it, and it made an impact on me. I am sure the readers of this brochure will start thinking in the direction where we as Hindus should be headed to. It is indeed a great work with enormous impact on the society we live in.

With kindest regards and best wishes,

**SATISH C. MISRA, PH.D.**
Director of the Board, WAVES, and Convener, WAVES International Conference (July 9-11, 2004) at the University of Maryland, Shady Grove Campus, Rockville, MD.

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From: kapoor5@aol.com
To: swamijyoti@gmail.com
Date: Tue, 5 Oct 2004 15:34:12 EDT
Subject: YOUR NEXT BROCHURE

It is regretful that India had faced hundreds of foreign invasions during the last 1000 years, and never have we shown any will to investigate what can be done to prevent such attacks. To keep saying that India became a victim of our internal division is patently wrong.

Initial attacks on India, both from across Hindukush and by Christians led by Portuguese, were carried out by small bands of ‘hooligans’. Succeeding in their invasions and looting of India, they enriched themselves to build greater power.

Just as the 9/11 commission has given its verdict that it was the failure of intelligence which brought about the attack on the New York City Twin Towers, for the same reasons, in India we too have suffered humiliation of defeats for failing to identify the motivation and means deployed by enemies to attack India repeatedly.

Nothing highlights the failure of India to properly assess the adversary’s motivation than the last major attack on India by China. While we kept on singing high pitch slogans: “*Hindi-Chini Bhai Bhai*”, Chinese were preparing to attack, and we found ourselves defenseless. The same cause and effect repeated when Pakistan too stealthily encroached, and confronted us at Kargil.

I hope that your brochure, compiling the causes which have led to the damaging of the Hindu civilization, may help awaken the Hindu society to reflect and take necessary steps to prevent future defeats.

With my best regards,

**VIJAY KAPOOR**
East–West Cultural Organization & “TEACHERS FOR AMERICA ORG.”

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